



PRESS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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MEXICAN LAW ENFORCEMENT OFFICER CHARGED WITH ATTEMPTING TO SMUGGLE AN ILLEGAL ALIEN INTO THE UNITED STATES

PHOENIX – The U.S. Attorney's Office for the District of Arizona announced today that on June 20, 2005, RAMON CHAVEZ-RODRIGUEZ, age 31, of San Luis, Sonora, Mexico was charged with Encouraging an Illegal Alien to Come to the United States.

The criminal complaint charges CHAVEZ-RODRIGUEZ, with violating Title 8, United States Code, Section 1324(a)(1)(A)(iv). The complaint alleges that CHAVEZ-RODRIGUEZ, a Mexican Transit Police Officer, using his official unmarked police vehicle, attempted to bring Maria Valladolid-Chavez, into the United States illegally. When questioned by Customs and Border Protection authorities, CHAVEZ-RODRIGUEZ admitted that he was going to be paid \$300.00 dollars for assisting Valladolid-Chavez to enter the United States illegally.

United States Attorney Paul Charlton said "corruption of public officials on both sides of the border is a very serious problem. There can be no meaningful movement forward in the effort to curb the flow of illegal drugs and illegal immigrants into the United States as long as law enforcement officials charged with enforcing the laws of our countries are willing to trade their honor for money." Charlton stressed that "while this corruption is limited to a few officials and should not be thought of as pervasive, the havoc that can be wreaked upon the justice system by a few corrupt officials is immeasurable."

A conviction for Encouraging an Illegal Alien to Come to the United States carries a maximum penalty of 10 years imprisonment, a \$250,000.00 fine or both. In determining an actual sentence, the District Court Judge will consult the U.S. Sentencing Guidelines, which

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provide appropriate sentencing ranges. The judge, however, is not bound by those guidelines in determining a sentence.

A criminal complaint is simply the method by which a person is charged with criminal activity and raises no inference of guilt. An individual is presumed innocent until competent evidence is presented to a jury that establishes guilt beyond a reasonable doubt.

The investigation preceding the complaint was conducted by the Bureau of Customs and Border Protection.

The prosecution is being handled by Gary Restaino, Assistant U.S. Attorney, District of Arizona, Phoenix.

CASE NUMBER: 05-2670M
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